



STATE OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE
1111 Washington Street SE
PO Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

January 19, 2007

**Topic #8: Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program,
Education-Enforcement (E&E) Category: Project Caps & Evaluation Questions**

Approved by the Director: Laura Johnson *LJ*

Prepared & Presented By: Greg Lovelady, Manager, Applied Planning

Proposed Action: Decision

Summary:

As reported at the November 2006 IAC board meeting, interested persons have been analyzing four policies related to the NOVA E&E category:

1. Should the way E&E funding caps are applied be changed from a limit on the amount allowed for employees and equipment to a limit placed on total grant amounts?
2. If changed, what should the new cap be?
3. Should more importance be placed on providing sponsor matching funds?
4. Should a new evaluation question addressing "non-government contributions" be adopted?

After public review and comment, staff is providing its recommendations on these policy questions.

Staff Recommendation:

Based on discussions with the advisory committee and in consideration of public comment, we recommend the following changes:

1. **Delete the current cap policy:**
 - "Capital equipment grants are limited to \$30,000 per two-year grant cycle per applicant for any item or combination of capital items listed in this manual."
 - "Personnel grants are limited to \$54,000 per year per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee, including related items, or combination of items, listed in this manual. Costs for projects involving less than an FTE will be prorated by



percentage. For example, the maximum eligible reimbursement for a half FTE is \$27,000."

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2. Adopt a new cap policy: | The maximum amount that will be reimbursed (grant amount) is \$200,000 per project. |
| 3. Adopt a revised matching fund policy: | Recalibrate "Matching Shares" evaluation question #6 which increases the amount of match required to receive evaluation points (Attachment 1). |
| 4. Adopt a new non-government contributions policy: | Add an evaluation question that addresses the amount of sponsor match derived from non-government sources (Attachment 2). |

Background:

1. and 2. *Funding Cap*. Currently, IAC has E&E caps (the maximum amount that will be reimbursed) only on the amounts provided for employees and capital equipment. Feedback from interested people has called for revising this policy in favor of a blanket per-project cap, like that used in other IAC grant programs.

3. *Recalibrate Emphasis On Matching Funds*. Though IAC has always encouraged matching funds in the NOVA Program, matches have never been required. However, through the years, the amount of matching value provided by project sponsors, as a percentage of total project cost, has been increasing to the point where the evaluation criteria is not as meaningful as when originally adopted. In the last E&E grants cycle, for example, among all applicants, the average match was about 34 percent.

4. *Add an evaluation question that addresses reduction of government costs*. To help reduce government costs, IAC often encourages applicants to supplement a project's match with labor and material donations from non-governmental sources. In keeping with this policy, we recommend that an evaluation question similar to that already used in other IAC programs (for example, Boating Facilities and National Recreational Trails) be added to the E&E category.

Analysis:

1. and 2. *Funding Cap*. Adopting a per-project cap will eliminate the relative complexity¹ of the current policy and discourage large requests that can reduce the total number of projects funded. It will also allow applicants the ability to scope their projects without imposed limits to specific eligible elements like personnel and equipment.

Setting a maximum per project grant of \$200,000 is an estimate of what many, including NOVA Advisory Committee members, feel will work best.

Points to consider:

- Since 2001, the median² E&E grant has been about \$58,000. The average request has been about \$81,000. Just four sponsors have requested and been awarded

¹ The current policy becomes somewhat complicated when applicants seek funding for multiple FTEs, each of which plan to work a different number of hours annually at different hourly rates.

² The point midway between all grant amounts.

more than \$200,000. In total, these four (Chelan, Grant, and Yakima Counties; Cle Elum Ranger District) have submitted 10 projects since 2001.

- For years, IAC has encouraged joint applications, such as when two or more entities, like the Forest Service and a County Sheriff, combine forces to submit a single application. The advantage is in improved coordination and the economies of scale realized in the project's administration. The disadvantage is that it has always meant a larger and overall more expensive project.
- A \$200,000 project cap in the last E&E grants cycle: (1) Could have freed up about \$295,000, potentially allowing funding of an additional four projects; (2) Would have led to the division of two projects (\$328,764 and \$315,114) into smaller projects, requiring more time for project review and evaluation, but also allowing for more discretion and control in determining which elements of the projects would be funded³.

3. *Recalibrate Emphasis On Matching Funds.* IAC's policy is to encourage matches by awarding evaluation points, but the points awarded have not kept pace with the increasing amount of match provided. Thus, the value of this question in helping to rank projects has been greatly diminished.

Applicants often opt to provide more match to either score higher or as a means of compensating for the existing cap of \$54,000 per full-time employee. Last year, for example, most applicants received the maximum number of evaluation points for this question. To remedy this, we propose that IAC increase the amount of match required to be awarded evaluation points for E&E question 6 at each level. The proposed modifications are shown in Attachment 1.

4. *Add an evaluation question to encourage an increase in sponsor match derived from non-government sources.* Though the addition of this standard question, which already exists in most of IAC's grant programs, will have a slight increase on applicant and advisory committee workload, it will have an overall positive program impact of reducing government costs associated with sponsor match.

Next Steps:

Add the above updates into NOVA's E&E Policy Manual in time for implementation in 2007 and presentation at the March 14-15 application workshops in Moses Lake, Longview, and Seattle.

Attachments:

- Attachment #1 ~ Revision of Education-Enforcement evaluation question #6, "Matching Shares"

³ In other words, when IAC is asked to fund a large, expensive E&E project it normally has only two options: fund it or do not fund it. Although the board has the prerogative of funding only the portion of the project that may be deemed the higher priority, typically it does not. However, if large projects are divided and submitted as two proposals that are evaluated separately, prioritization automatically results through the evaluation process.

- Attachment #2 ~ Proposed new Education-Enforcement evaluation question to reward "Non-Governmental Contributions"
- Resolution 2007-03
- Attachment #3 ~ Public feedback.

Attachment 1

SCORED BY IAC STAFF

6) Matching Shares. What percentage of the total project cost is the applicant contributing?

NOVA Plan Policies A-1, B-4.

IAC staff scores this question based on information provided in the application. Only elements considered reimbursable are eligible for use as an applicant's match. (Manual #13) No additional information is required.

- a. 0 to ~~6~~10 percent of the project's value will be contributed.(0 points)
- b. ~~6~~10.01 to ~~4~~20 percent of the project's value will be contributed..... (1 point)
- c. ~~4~~220.01 to ~~4~~830 percent of the project's value will be contributed.(2 points)
- d. ~~4~~8.30.01 to ~~2~~40 percent of the project's value will be contributed.(3 points)
- e. ~~2~~440.01 to ~~3~~50 percent of the project's value will be contributed.(4 points)
- f. Over ~~3~~50 percent of the project's value will be contributed.....(5 points)

IAC project staff will award from 0 to 5 points; the multiplier is one.

Last revised 20047.

TEAM SCORED

xx) **Non-Government Contributions.** **Does this project *reduce government costs* through documented donations (labor, equipment, etc.), signed cooperative agreements, or signed memoranda of understanding (including no cost leases, interagency agreements, donations, or similar cost saving arrangements)?**

Because contributions sometimes “disappear” after project evaluation, it is very important that applicants provide to IAC staff for the project file such documentation as *signed* agreements or memoranda of understanding. The following considerations are provided to help applicants and evaluators understand some of the elements that help a project score well.

- The significance of the non-governmental contribution for this project
 - The longevity of the commitment for this project.
- a. No or weak evidence of non-government contributions provided for the current grant request..... (0 points)
 - b. Little – modest evidence of non-government contributions provided (1-2 points)
 - c. Signed documentation of significant non-government contributions provided to IAC staff.....(3-4 points)
 - d. Signed documentation of exceptionally high non-government contributions provided to IAC staff..... (5 points)

Evaluators award a maximum of 5 points; the multiplier is one.

Revised x/x/200x

RESOLUTION #2007-03

NOVA E&E Policies: Project Caps and Evaluation Questions

WHEREAS, the funding cap policy in the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation's (IAC) Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program, Education and Enforcement (E&E) Category is generally considered to be complex and supportive of disproportionately large grant requests; and

WHEREAS, a new cap policy, based on limiting the total amount that may be granted to each project, has been developed which resolves the above issues; and

WHEREAS, many agree that an individual E&E project cap of \$200,000 will work best; and

WHEREAS, the E&E Category's "matching funds" evaluation question has not kept pace with the increasing amount of value provided by applicants and thus has been of little use in recent years in helping to rank projects; and

WHEREAS, the evaluation points for this question have been redrafted in a way that would re-establish the question's usefulness by increasing the amount of match needed to receive evaluation points; and

WHEREAS, the E&E Category is in need of a new evaluation question, similar to those that now exist in most other IAC grant programs, that will encourage the reduction of government costs; and

WHEREAS, such a question has been prepared,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that IAC does hereby replace its current NOVA Program E&E caps policy, which is based on Full-Time Equivalent employees and maximum capital expenditures, with a new \$200,000 maximum grant award per individual project policy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAC hereby adopts the revised E&E category "Matching Shares" evaluation shown in Attachment 1; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAC hereby adopts the new E&E category "Non-Government Contributions" evaluation question shown in Attachment 2; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that IAC's Director is authorized to implement each of these policies in time for the 2007 grants cycle.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: February 8, 2007

**Comments From The Public On A Proposal To
Change the Cap Policy and Modify an Evaluation Question
NOVA Program, E&E Category**

Original announcement

From: Lovelady, Greg
Sent: December 13, 2006
Subject: NOVA E&E
Grant Program Policy
Proposals

To people interested in the NOVA E&E category:

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) is analyzing policy questions related to the Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program's Education and Enforcement (E&E) category:

- Should the way funding caps are applied be changed?
- Should more importance be placed on providing matching funds?

To answer these questions, staff has developed proposals for feedback and possible adoption by IAC at its February 8-9, 2007, meeting. The proposals are:

1. Change the way in which E&E caps are applied and implement this by establishing a per project cap of \$200,000.
2. Increase the amount of matching value needed to receive evaluation points.
3. Add a new evaluation question that rewards matching value from nongovernmental sources.

For more information, click:

http://www.iac.wa.gov/iac/temp/proposed_nova_ee_changes.htm

If you have questions or would like to comment on these proposals, please contact me at:

Greg Lovelady(GregL@iac.wa.gov)
Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
1111 Washington Street SE
PO Box 40917, Olympia, WA 98504-0917
360/ 902-3008 ~ 360/ 902-3026 (fax) ~ TDD 360/ 902-1996

Comment #7

Tim Foss, Trails
Manager, Cle Elum
Ranger District
1/15/07

Original Comment from Mr. Foss:

Dear Greg,

I hope this is not too late to offer some thoughts regarding the proposed cap on E&E funding; we have been thinking this through for some time. I gather that the bottom-line intent of this proposal is to increase the overall number of recreationists that can be contacted under NOVA-funded E&E projects. The thinking goes, I assume, that spreading the money more evenly around the state would result in more projects being funded, and thus an overall increase in number of contacts. This is an important goal, and I agree with it completely, but I believe before going ahead it would be important to take a rigorous look at whether this proposal would actually achieve that result. It seems very possible that reducing the amount of money available to the highest-use areas, and directing more toward the lower-use areas may result in the opposite – an overall decrease in number of contacts.

In a high-use area such as ours, it is not unusual for a team of two rangers to contact several hundred people per weekend. For instance, during this past season (April 1 –September 30), the Cle Elum Ranger District E&E Rangers made a total of 17, 291 informal contacts, and issued 423 warnings and citations. This is an average of 708 contacts per week, the vast majority of which occurred on weekends. (This information taken for IAC form 208, submitted with our recent billing package, and is based on detailed daily records

that our E&E Rangers keep). I suspect that the other high-use areas experience similar contact rates.

So I believe it would be a relatively straightforward analysis to determine if this proposal would achieve the desired result. I might suggest a calculation as follows:

In our case – and I suspect the other high-use areas as well – nearly all the E&E money is spent on salary, equipment, and supplies for rangers on the ground, so a 35% decrease in available money will result in about a 35% decrease in number of contacts. This equates to 6200 fewer total contacts for this time period, or 248 per weekend.

Then look at what other E&E projects would have been funded had this policy been in place for the last funding cycle. There are probably several ways to estimate the number of contacts that would have been made under these projects (such as looking at the form 208 for funded projects on similar areas, etc.) and I would not presume to tell you what is the most accurate; I'm sure it varies according to what information is available for a given area. But I do believe one could make a reasonable estimate of contacts that could have been made, which would then allow a side-by-side comparison between what the high-use areas would lose, and what the lower-use areas would gain. This bottom line should then provide a reasonably accurate answer as to whether this funding cap proposal would achieve the desired result.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to call me at any time if I can be of any help in your deliberations. I hope you are able to come to some conclusion here that will best serve the land and recreationists of this state.

Greg Lovelady's reply:

Hi Tim,

Question: In the proposal, is it clear that agencies may submit as many applications as they wish, so long as the individual applications do not exceed \$200,000 each?

For example, in looking through PRISM I found that Cle Elum has submitted 12 E&E projects since entering the NOVA Program in 1997, six of which have been funded. Of the six funded projects only the last one, 05-1227, exceeds the draft limit of \$200,000. If the new policy had been adopted in 2005, the Cle Elum District still could have been awarded the \$315,114 for 05-1227 if it had been submitted in (divided among) two applications.

Yes, our goal in proposing this is to see if we can fund a few more projects each year. But we would also like to provide the IAC board with more options. In other words, when IAC is asked to fund a \$300,000 E&E project it normally has only two options: fund it or do not fund it.

Typically, the board does not fund only the portion of the project that may be deemed the higher priority. However, if large projects are divided and submitted as two proposals that are evaluated separately, this prioritization can occur more easily.

It does not mean that only one of the two applications would be funded. Rather, it would give IAC the option of considering that.

Mr. Foss' reply:

	<p>Thanks, Greg. That actually had not been clear to me, and I appreciate your enlightening me. Thanks!</p> <p>Tim Foss, Trails, Wilderness, and ORV Manager Cle Elum Ranger District</p>
<p>Comment #6 Gene Ellis, Deputy Sheriff, Chelan County January 15, 2007 9:14 AM</p>	<p>Greg, my comments on the proposed changes;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We do not disagree with the \$200,000 per project cap, does this include capitol. 2. An increase in matching funds under the current system would not show any net gain to IAC. I believe the matching funds should be in HARD DOLLARS or measurable matches,(i.e. fuel, repairs, purchase of items meaningful to your project). The use of volunteer hours does not provide IAC with a measurable match. Volunteers while valuable in and of themselves(particularly on M&O Projects), have no Law Enforcement authority on the trails or ORV areas, past history shows that the users just ignore their attempts to correct bad behavior. Many volunteers are not comfortable in confrontational situations. The use of volunteer hours as matching funds, will not reduce the dollars IAC spends. <p>Thank you.</p>
<p>Comment #5 Theressa Julius, NOVA Advisory Committee; Grays Harbor Council of Governments January 10, 2007</p>	<p>Thanks for the follow up Greg. I still only have the one comment, it would be a shame if joint – coordinated programs are hurt due to the cap. But it doesn't appear they had put in any comments. I say go ahead as planned.</p>
<p>Comment #4 Vladimir I Steblina, NOVA Advisory Committee; Wenatchee-Okanogan National Forest January 09, 2007</p>	<p>I'm still uncomfortable with the cap and its potential impacts. One possibility is to increase the cap \$50,000 or so for each additional agency involved. Hopefully, this will help joint applications between land agencies and county law enforcement. I also think in several areas we could put together joint DNR-FS applications. The committee should encourage those type of applications.</p>
<p>Comment #3 Tommy Thomson, ORV Recreationist December 19, 2006</p>	<p>Hi Greg,</p> <p>Here's a couple of my thoughts for you guys to mull over.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matching funds for such things as office rental/lease, heating/cooling, electricity, water, power, administrative support, phone bill, office equipment rental/lease, etc. need to be maxed out based on the number of people in the entire group. If, for instance, a sheriff's department has 19 officers and the request is for one E&E officer, the maximum the sheriff's department could claim would be 1/19th of their total budget for this stuff. In other words, their matching funds should be realistic based on their entire operation. 2. I think that capping IAC's portion of an E&E grant for one FTE in the \$80,000 to \$90,000/year is a decent figure. Please keep in mind that the folks that think ORV's shouldn't be allowed on the face of the earth will push for as much money as possible in the NOVA pots that have nothing to do with on-the-ground projects. 3. Here's one you didn't ask about.....Give 10 points to an agency that has

	<p>a demonstrated ORV sound testing/enforcement program. I'm talking about doing the testing and then giving them a ticket (\$) for non-compliance.</p> <p>Tommy</p>
<p>Comment #2 Randy Person, State Parks 12/14/06 (Phone call)</p>	<p>The proposal is very reasonable.</p>
<p>Comment #1 Lunsford, Jonn; Anacortes Parks and Recreation December 13, 2006</p>	<p>Hi Greg,</p> <p>Here are my thought given my limited experience with the NOVA E & E program.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is fine, if there is a way large grants to compete against one another and smaller grants to do the same. As a beneficiary of smaller grants, we are very appreciative of the grants we receive and they help us meet an important need, but they are perhaps seen as a minor need compared to those agencies seeking grants in the \$50K range. 2. This would be fine from our perspective. 3. This would be very difficult for us because I haven't been able to find private sources who would fund this aspect of our work... conservation and environmental education perhaps... but not law enforcement. <p>Thanks for asking.</p>